

SENTENCE STRUCTURES IN *MARK*: GREEK AND ENGA

In preparing to translate the Gospel of Mark into Enga, a language of the Western Highlands of New Guinea, it was necessary to compare Enga structure with the sentence structure of St. Mark's Greek.

Marcan syntax

The characteristics of the syntax of Mark are well-known and are described in commentaries such as those of Swete and Taylor.¹ Swete writes:

'The body of [Mark's] work consists of a series of sentences connected by the simplest of Greek copulas, each contributing a fresh fact to the reader's knowledge, and each by its vivid and direct presentation of the fact claiming the closest attention.'²

But if Mark leans toward paratactic sentence structure, he also knows how to make effective use of subordinate clauses and participles. An example of the latter is 5: 25 f., where a sentence is built up of seven participles, followed by the principal verb:

Having a flow of blood . . . having suffered . . . having spent . . . not being helped, but rather becoming worse . . . having heard . . . having come . . . touched.

Enga sentences

Enga sentences may consist of a single verb, such as *ipu*, 'come!' On the other hand, they may be very complex. As an example, an Enga text consisting of twenty-four sentences was found to contain sentences ranging from five to sixty-nine words in length. The average length in that particular text was 14.7 words.

Enga sentences have subject and predicate. The subject may consist of a single word, as in *éba púu*, 'you go!' Or it may not be expressed at all, as in *púu*, 'go!' Or again the subject may consist of a noun or nouns; adjectives; possessives; articles; and noun clauses. Example: *Nabanyá raparapá sákapae kwáka sabapú ógo kagwarámo*, 'my blue laplap that I bought yesterday is torn'.

The predicate may contain an indirect and a direct object; adjectives; articles; possessives; expressions indicating time, place, manner, circumstance, and purpose; dependent verbs; and an independent verb. Example: *Akári*

¹ Henry Barclay Swete, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (3rd ed.). London: Macmillan (2nd ed. 1902); Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; pp. xlvii ff. Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. London: Macmillan & Co., 1953; pp. 45 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, p. xlviiii.

dokomé kwáka itápi neé yawápaepi dúpa baanyá édapi wanépi dúpa maíanya Wápaka púpyá, 'yesterday the man went to Wabag to give his wife and children firewood and cooked food'.

In all the above Enga is not unlike New Testament Greek. But in some other points of sentence structure Enga differs notably from the Greek.

Sentence-medial verb forms

In addition to its wealth of finite and non-finite verb forms, Greek makes use of a rich variety of conjunctions, particles, and relative pronouns and adverbs in constructing complex, extended sentences. In Enga, on the other hand, sentence-medial verb forms are the mortar with which extended sentences are built up.

There are two main groups of Enga sentence-medial verb forms. The first group is used when the subject of the sentence-medial verb is the same as that of the verb that follows it. This group of forms is not conjugated. Mainly it includes three forms, corresponding to (1) incomplete action simultaneous with the action of the principal verb; (2) completed action prior in time to the principal verb; (3) proposed, impending action. Examples:

Baamé mapú náo adáka pelyámo, 'he sweet-potato eating home is-going'
(i.e. he is eating a sweet potato on the way home).

Baamé mapú nápara adáka pelyámo, 'he sweet-potato having-eaten home is-going' (i.e. after having eaten a sweet potato, he is going home).

Baamé mapú nára adáka pelyámo, 'he sweet-potato to-eat home is-going'
(i.e. he is going home to eat a sweet potato).

The second group of Enga sentence-medial forms, unlike the preceding, is fully conjugated in all persons, numbers, and tenses. Like Enga nouns and adjectives, verbs of this group may take article-demonstratives and are subject to certain of the noun-adjective suffixes. Again using the verb 'to eat' as an example, some of the sentence-medial possibilities in this group include:

<i>neámo dóko</i>	'he who ate', or 'that which he ate'.
<i>neámo dokónyá</i>	'of him who ate', or 'with reference to his eating', or 'where he ate'.
<i>neámo dokomé</i>	'by means of his eating', or 'he who ate' (agentive).
<i>neámo dósa</i>	'to where he ate', or 'where he ate'.
<i>neámosa</i>	'when he ate', or 'because he ate'.
<i>neámoaka dóko</i>	'even though he ate'.
<i>neámopa</i>	'in the circumstance of his eating', i.e. 'when he ate', or 'because he ate'.
<i>neámo dokópá</i>	(same as preceding).

Conjugated sentence-medial forms with the circumstantial suffix *-pa* are regularly used in Enga when there is a change of subject within the sentence, i.e. when the subject of the sentence-medial verb is different from the subject of the verb that follows it. Examples:

Menamé nabá neámopa nabamé ée ráa náeo, 'pig me it-bit-with I cry saying did-not' (when (or although) the pig bit me, I did not cry).

Ayúú ipatámopa nabá nápató, 'rain it-comes-with I not-shall-go' (if it rains, I shall not go).

Like circumstantial participles in New Testament Greek¹, the Enga sentence-medial forms in *-pa* do not in themselves indicate time, cause, condition, or concession. They merely state an attendant circumstance which then acquires significance in its context.

How Enga makes use of its verbs in building sentences can be seen in the following example, taken from a legend about a young man who leaped into his lover's open grave and was buried with her. In this sentence, after the introductory phrase, there are three main divisions, marked by changes in the subject. Within each division a wealth of action is indicated by the use of non-conjugated perfective and imperfective sentence-medial forms.

Introducer, First Section	<i>Ópa péteaminó ogópá</i> <i>éda ogónyá pimarége</i> <i>yúu médé baá páo</i> <i>yópe ráta pyóo</i> <i>ée ráo</i> <i>awári ráo</i> <i>máru ogónyá</i> <i>kateámopa</i>	'When they had done that, then on one occasion the woman's brother, going, repeatedly whistling, crying, going round and round, stood on the grave and then
Second Section	<i>ákari ogómé ráru</i> <i>pituú</i> <i>nabá parélyona, yápa</i> <i>kaitíni rúbá reámopa</i>	the man (who had been buried), speaking (so that he was heard but not seen), said, "I'm in here, open up quickly", and then
Third Section	<i>máru rubápara</i> <i>ákari ógo nyépara</i> <i>éda ógo tamwína</i> <i>káea-ramí.</i>	(the woman's brother) opened the grave, took out the man, and left the woman to decay.'

Introducers

Mark habitually connects his speech together with *kai*, 'and'; or sometimes with *gar*, 'for'; *de*, 'but'; or with nothing at all. Enga, too, insists on connecting nearly every sentence with what goes before it. But Enga has no words such as *kai*, *gar*, and *de*. Instead Enga repeats or summarizes a portion of the preceding sentence. An example of this is seen in the sentence above, where *ópa péteaminó ogópá*, 'when they had done that', summarizes what had been said in the foregoing sentence. Such introducer statements may consist only of a single word, or they may be fairly long.

Word order

A third area of syntactical contrast between New Testament Greek and Enga is in word order. There is much flexibility in word order in New Testa-

¹ A. T. Robertson and W. Hersey Davis, *A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1933 (10th ed.); pp. 382 ff.

ment Greek. Regarding Enga we note here only one point: Enga insists that the principal verb must come at the very end of the sentence, and likewise that a sentence-medial verb must come at the very end of that portion of the sentence to which it belongs. With the above introductory comments we proceed to what is the object of this paper: a discussion of some problems encountered in seeking Enga equivalents to Marcan sentence structures, and of solutions arrived at.

A. Paratactic Structure

And

Mark's many short sentences joined by *kai*, 'and', can be fairly readily reproduced in Enga. Following Enga usage a sentence-medial verb form will often be used where Mark has a *kai*, and for much the same reason.

1: 37. *Dokaitamé baá kadátara . . . reámí-pyáa*, 'they him having-found . . . said' (they found him and they said to him).

In other cases an introducer will take the place of the *kai*:

1: 10. *Dópa píamó dokópá baá edakínya kataó pyakaétara . . .* 'when he had done that, he, coming up out of the water . . .'

Sometimes, of course, the 'and' can be most naturally translated by simply omitting it.

But

The adversative conjunction *de*, 'but', as in 7: 36 and 9: 50, is another matter. This idea can best be conveyed in Enga by using the adversative-concessive suffix *-aka*:

9: 50. *Aípi dóko epeáka dóko, aípi dóko téde nápiigi ijetámopa . . .*
'Even though salt is good, if salt becomes insipid . . .'

The more emphatic adversative *alla*, 'but', is found about forty-four times in Mark. In thirty-nine of these cases it follows a negative assertion and has the idea of 'but rather'. Example: 'See that you say nothing to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest' (1: 44).

Two possible ways of achieving this emphasis in Enga both involve placing the negative at the very end of the first clause:

Ébame edakáripí méde ramaía náenya . . . píuu, 'you a person tell of-not-doing . . . go,'

or *Ebame edakáripí méde ramaípi dáá. Ramaía náenya . . . píuu*, 'you a person tell, no! Of-not-telling . . . go'.

Fourteen times Mark employs the adversative *ei mē* in the sense of 'except'. For example: 'He allowed no one to go with him but Peter, James, and John' (5: 37). This must be reconstructed in Enga as follows: 'He allowed no one to go with him—Peter, James and John only'. Or: 'He allowed Peter, James, and John to go with Him—no one else'.

Or

Mark uses several disjunctive conjunctions.

ē, 'or', in an interrogative context can usually be rendered by the Enga interrogative particle *páde*. Sometimes on the other hand it can be omitted, since Enga syntax requires in any case that both deliberative alternatives have interrogative suffixes.

12: 14. *Maiimápe, páde námaiimape*, 'shall-we-give, or-on-the-contrary shall-we-not-give?' Or:

Maiimápe, námaiimape, 'shall-we-give? shall-we-not-give?'

oudē and *mēdē* are sometimes no more than copulative conjunctions plus negatives (as in 4: 22 and 13: 15). But in many cases they bear the meaning of 'not even', or 'nor even' (e.g. 2: 2; 12: 10). The intensifying Enga suffix *-aka* is helpful here:

2: 2. *Deé páda mēdē násia-pyáa. Ádá maúri dosá násiakapyáa*. 'More room any there-was-not. House door there there-was-not-too.'

For

Mark uses the explanatory, inferential conjunction *gar*, 'for', over sixty-five times in his Gospel. A common method in Enga to indicate that a statement is explanatory of what has preceded it is to make the statement without using an introducer phrase. Many of the usages of *gar* in Mark can be best handled in this way. Instances are 7: 27 and 14: 5.

Sometimes the sentence with *gar* can be made into a causal clause preceding the sentence of which it is explanatory. 'He went away grieving, for he had many possessions' (10: 22) could be reconstructed as: 'Because he had many possessions, he went away grieving'.

Occasionally it may be desirable to show the explanatory relationship by repeating in the explanatory sentence the verb of the sentence that is being explained. A possible example is 9: 34, which would read: 'They were silent. On the road they had discussed among themselves who was greatest, and in connection with that (Enga: *ogónyá*) they were silent.'

B. Hypotactic Structure

The participle

The Greek participle is a verbal adjective. It is dependent on the main verb and at the same time supplements it or reveals circumstances relative to it.¹

In the great majority of cases the Enga sentence-medial verb forms are admirably suited for translating Mark's many participles.

Where a participle modifies the subject of the sentence, the non-conjugated sentence-medial forms can be used. If the action is simultaneous with the action of the main verb (e.g. 'passing along', 1: 16), the imperfective form is used (in this case, *pádo*). Where the action precedes the action of the main verb (e.g. 'having come,' 5: 27), the perfective sentence-medial verb (here *ipúpara*) is used.

Mark's several periphrastic forms can also be well rendered by using the non-conjugated sentence-medial forms.

1: 6. *Yoáneme náo katéa-pyáa*, 'John eating stood' (John was eating).

¹ Robertson and Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

But in the case of a genitive absolute, or when a participle modifies a word which is not the subject of the sentence, the Enga conjugated, change-of-subject sentence-medial forms must be used.

- 5: 35. *Baá pii ráo kateámopa*, 'while he was speaking.'
 14: 62. *Edakárinya Ikinígi dokomé . . . kigi toraé ogónyá pittámo dóko nyákamame kadatamína*, 'you will see the Son of Man, who will sit on the right hand . . .'

Relative clauses

Instead of employing a relative pronoun as Greek does, Enga either inserts the 'relative clause' between the head word and its article-demonstrative (which in Enga follows the noun), or places it immediately before its head word. Examples: *Mená kwáka kadapú ógo kalyámo*, 'pig yesterday I-saw that-one-is-here'. Or: *Kwáka kadapú mená ógo kalyámo*, 'yesterday I-saw pig that-one is-here'. The meaning of both statements is: 'The pig that I saw yesterday is here'. This usage is readily applicable in our translation:

- 10: 38. *Káibu nabamé nyilyo dóko nyilyáboime kápa pyóo nyetabípi*, 'baptism I receive that-one you-two sufficient making will-receive' (are you able to receive the baptism that I am receiving?)

This type of construction can be employed without a head word in much the same way as relative clauses in Greek are used as substantives.

- 4: 9. *Karé káita sigi dúpame sarapápe*, 'ear road they-have those hear' (those who have ears to hear, let them hear).

Occasionally one of Mark's relative clauses can effectively become a separate sentence in Enga.

- 1: 2. 'I send my messenger before you. He will prepare your way.'

The idea of indefiniteness in the relative pronoun ('whoever') is difficult to express in Enga except by using the plural with 'all' instead of the singular. 'Whoever loses his life' (8: 35) would have to be reconstructed as 'all those who will lose their lives'.

Temporal clauses

Mark employs several different expressions and constructions to express temporal relationships both explicitly and implicitly.

To convey the idea of 'when' he frequently employs temporal clauses introduced by *hote* (2: 25) or *hotan* (3: 11). A parallel construction which conveys temporal meaning contextually is the circumstantial participle, either in agreement with some noun in the sentence (e.g. 6: 16), or, where a change of subject is involved, in the genitive absolute (e.g. 1: 32). These will all be handled in Enga by the use of sentence-medial verb forms.

Where a change of subject is involved, the circumstantial affix *-pa* is the one usually employed when the idea of 'when' is intended. 'When the sun had set' (1: 32) becomes in Enga *nitá radá pyáteamopa*, 'sun down had-struck'. An alternative which makes the temporal idea explicit is *nitá radá pyáteamo gii ogópá*, 'sun down had-struck time at-that'.

Mark's Greek expresses the idea of durative contemporaneousness in a number of ways (cf. 2: 19; 4: 4; 5: 18). These are rendered into Enga in virtually the same way as the 'when' expressions. The durative idea can be fully conveyed by using imperfective verb forms.

In 14: 7 *hotan thelēte*, 'whenever you wish', contains the idea of 'indefinitely frequent'. Here we may use the Enga idiom *másetaminuri pyóo*, which means 'in accord with your [future] thinking'. This expression sometimes conveys the sense of 'in accord with the manner (or the content) or your [future] thinking', or, in other words, 'as you wish'. But in a given context it can also mean 'corresponding to the time (or frequency) of your [future] thinking', i.e. 'whenever you wish'.

meta with the infinitive in the sense of 'after' is treated in Enga the same as *hote*, except that a perfective verb form is used. Thus in 1: 14 we say *Etótete Yóane dóko ajéteamopa*, 'after Herod had arrested John'.

The idea of 'until' (6: 10; 9: 1; 12: 36; 13: 30) cannot be expressed in Enga with nearly the facility that it can in Greek or English. Almost every case seems to require a separate manner of treatment. The following indicates how these passages can be reconstructed for translation into Enga.

6: 10. 'Whatever house you enter, stay in it for as long a time as you remain in that place.'

9: 1. 'Some of the people who are standing here will not die right away; they will first see the Kingdom of God coming in power, and then they will die.'

12: 36. 'Sit at my right hand. I shall put your enemies under your feet.'

13: 30. 'While the people now living are still here and alive, all these things will come true.'

Local clauses

In fifteen instances Mark uses local clauses introduced by *hopou*, 'where'. Of these, five contain the particles *an* or *ean*, which in combination with the *hopou* yield the meaning 'wherever'. To express corresponding meaning, Enga ordinarily utilizes a change-of-subject sentence-medial verb followed by the article-demonstrative with locative (*-nya* or *-sa*) ending.

2: 4. *Baá kateámo ogónyá ádá yági dóko ropeámi-pyáa*, 'he was there house thatching it they-removed' (they removed the thatching where he was).

In 2: 4; 14: 14 and 16: 6 the local clauses are adjectival. In Enga these will be treated the same as relative clauses.

16: 6. *Páda baá séteabino ógo kajepápe*, 'place him they-two-laid it see' (see the place [where] they laid him).

Comparative clauses

Enga is well equipped to reproduce the sense of the comparative clauses of which Mark uses about fifteen. Where these clauses in Greek are usually preceded by *kathōs* or *hōs*, 'as', in Enga they are followed by one of a number of such expressions as *dokaíta ijóo*, 'becoming like that'; *dópaka pyóo*, 'doing that same way'; or *-ri pyóo*, 'doing like that'.

- 11: 6. *Ákari dorápome Yesúsame reámori pyóo ákari dúpa ramaiábí-pyáa*, 'men those-two Jesus as-he-had-said doing men those they-two-told' (they told them as Jesus had said).
- 14: 21. *Baá kadaó pépa pyápae silyámo dópaka pyóo Edakárinya Ikinígi dóko pelyámo*, 'him seeing paper written is that-same-way doing of-man son he is-going' (the Son of Man goes as it is written of Him).

In 7: 36 we have a comparative construction with *hoson mallon*, 'so much the more', which is very difficult to reproduce in Enga. A possible reconstruction that captures most of the sense of the Greek is:

Jesus forbade them to tell anyone. But although he forbade them, they kept on spreading the story more and more.

Causal clauses

A large number of Mark's causal constructions are what Robertson calls 'paratactic causal sentences.'¹ They are hard to distinguish in meaning from sentences that begin with an explanatory *gar*, 'for'. A sentence of this type usually supplies the reason why the statement preceding it was made, rather than the antecedent cause of the fact contained in that statement. This distinction is not always easy to demonstrate, but it is nevertheless recognizable.

Examples of 'paratactic causal sentences' beginning with *hoti*, 'because', are: 'Get behind me, Satan, for you do not think the thoughts of God but the thoughts of men' (8: 33); and 'I see men, for I discern walking beings like trees' (8: 24). Like sentences beginning with *gar* these can be expressed in Enga by asyndeton, that is, by omitting the introducer. In English we use a similar way of showing reason or cause: 'I don't want these shoes; they're too small'. (See also 1: 27; 5: 4; 6: 17; 7: 19; 14: 21, 27.)

The sentence-medial verb with the suffix *-sa* is often used in Enga to signify cause. This form will serve well in 4: 5, where the Greek causal construction consists of the preposition *dia*, 'on account of', with an infinitive.

Yuú rógo ráo násiamosa, yápá ragá réa-pyáa, 'ground much saying because-there-was-not, quickly come-up it-said' (it came up quickly because there was not much ground).

In some cases reason or ground can best be shown simply by the use of the circumstantial endings *-pa* or *-nya* with sentence-medial verb forms.

- 16: 14. *Kíní rámo ráo másara ndeamino ogónyá baamé pyáranya ramaiá-pyáa*, 'He reproached them in connection with the fact that they did not believe.'
- 6: 34. *Sétao kategé ákari médé nácatege sipisípi dopáre ijóo kateaminopa baamé edakári dokaitá kódo kaéa-pyáa*. 'In the circumstance that they were like sheep without a shepherd, He felt pity for the people.'

¹ A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931, 5th ed.; p. 962.

In still another group of instances in which the causal clause gives the reason for someone's action, the causal idea can be conveyed in Enga by employing a non-conjugated sentence-medial form of 'seeing' or 'knowing' or 'saying'.

- 9: 38. *Naíma peamáno ogónyá baá wataó nápeamo kadátara naímame baá kaená reáma.* 'Seeing that he was not following us, we stopped him.'

Purpose clauses

We have already mentioned the rule that Enga sentences cannot end with dependent clauses, and this of course affects the manner in which Greek purpose clauses are reproduced in Enga.

The most common method of constructing a clause of purpose in Enga is to use a hortative or imperative verb form in the purpose clause, which is then made the object of an immediately following unconjugated sentence-medial form of the verb 'saying' or 'thinking'. This unconjugated sentence-medial verb modifies the verb of the principal clause.

- 2: 10. *Edakárinya Ikinígi dokomé isa yuú dakénya koó dúpa kápa páo kunányá nepége-rámo ráo kajepápe rátara baamé yógé papá-tabótáe dóko ramaióo . . .* 'having said "know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins", he said to the paralytic . . .'

- 10: 13. *Yesúsa kateámo ogónyá edakári dúpame wáné wanákupi koré dúpanya yógé dúpa baamé miníná ráo ramináo epeámi-pyáa.* 'They brought little children to Jesus, saying that he should touch (third person singular imperative) them.'

In some instances when the subject of the purpose clause is the same as the subject of the main clause, a sentence-medial purpose form may be employed.

- 10: 17. *Nabamé réte eteté kategé ogónyá móea nyáranya aipá pitú ráape.* 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?'

Any of these methods can be used to express negative purpose by using the negative prefix *na-* or the auxiliary verb of negation.

But another idiomatic way of expressing negative purpose in Enga omits the negative and uses the future tense of the verb, with sometimes the addition of the suffix *-na*. The clause then takes on the nature of a warning, and is similar to English clauses beginning with 'for fear that'.

- 3: 9. *Edakári kabú ogomé baá tabukinatamina rátara baamé baanyá tóre kategé ákari dúpame sípi yakáné méde nyóo ásare baá marisóo séténa réa-pyáa.* 'Saying that the crowds would crush him, he told his disciples to have a boat stand by for him.'

- 14: 2. *Edakári dúpame pyáo pilyá pyané pitamina, kotó gíi adáke ogónyá baá nápyamana, dópa redámi-pyáa.* "'Let's not kill him on the feast day; the people will riot", they said.'

Over twenty-five times Mark employs *hina*, 'that', in what Robertson called 'sub-final clauses'.¹ Blass-Debrunner describes this usage as a parallel in Koiné Greek to the 'infinitive as a complement to the verb'.² Mark uses clauses of this type with verbs meaning to allow (11: 16); beg (7: 26; 5: 18); charge (5: 43; 6: 8; 8: 30); command (13: 34); compel (15: 21); give authority (11: 28); grant (10: 37); pray (14: 35); preach (6: 12); stir up (15: 11); tell (3: 9); wish (9: 30); and write (9: 12).

In general these clauses are translated into Enga in the same way as are purpose clauses. The verb in the *hina* clause becomes an imperative or a hortative, which is followed by a form of the verb *rélyo*, 'to say'.

5: 18. *Wábá agaróo koó parétá ákari ogomé naríba tóre bonána ráo téé réá-pyáa.* 'He who had had the evil spirit begged, saying, "Let's go together".'

9: 18. *Nabamé ébanya tóre kategé ákari dúpame wataó pyakamaiiná rapú.* 'I told your disciples to drive (third person imperative) it out.'

Result clauses

Mark uses result clauses introduced by *hōste*, 'so that', thirteen times. Of these, eleven are with infinitive and two with present indicative verb forms. The latter two (2: 28; 10: 8) can be treated in Enga as independent sentences, the introducers of which will adequately render the meaning of the *hōste*.

The eleven clauses with *hōste* and the infinitive relate factual results that occurred in the past. As in other clauses, translation of these is effected by Enga word order, which will not allow a dependent clause to stand at the end of a sentence.

There seem to be two fairly satisfactory methods of conveying the idea of the Greek result clause in Enga. One is to change the main clause into a dependent circumstantial or causal clause, with the content of the Greek result clause then serving as the principal clause.

2: 2. *Edakári rógó ipáo kápeamínosa páda násia-pyáa.* 'Because many people gathered together, there was no room.'

The other method preserves a little more of the prominence of the Greek principal clause by using two sentences instead of one.

1: 27. *Dópa píamopá edakári pitakamé móna ádao warú réamí-pyáa. Warú rá tara dóko aipá pilyá kajémape ráo médé ramái ramái pyóo kateamí-pyáa.* 'When he did that, all the people were astounded. Astounded, they said to one another, "What is this?"'

¹ Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 991.

² F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. and revised from the 9th–10th German ed. by Robert W. Funk). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961; p. 199.

Conditional clauses

Mark employs three types of conditional sentences.

1. *ei*, 'if', followed by a verb in the indicative mood in the conditional clause and by a verb in the indicative or imperative mood in the main clause. According to Blass-Debrunner this type of condition refers to an obvious reality or to a proposition asserted by the speaker or by others to be a reality.¹ It often comes close in meaning to a clause of reason. Conditional sentences of this type in Mark include 3: 26; 8: 34; 9: 22 f.; 9: 35; 11: 25 f.; 14: 29. When the *ei* is followed by *tis*, 'anyone', as in 8: 34 and 9: 35, the clause is not greatly different from an indefinite relative clause. 8: 12 is in meaning not a conditional clause at all, but a strong statement of negation corresponding to a Hebrew usage.

2. *ei* followed by past tenses of the indicative mood in both the conditional clause and in the main clause, with the particle *an* usually occurring in the main clause. This construction 'indicates that the assumption does not correspond to reality'.² Examples in Mark are 13: 20 and 14: 21. 9: 42 should also be listed here.³

3. In the following cases Mark uses *ean*, 'if', with the subjunctive mood in the conditional clause, followed by the present or future indicative or the imperative in the main clause: 3: 24 f.; 3: 27; 5: 28; 7: 3 f.; 8: 3; 9: 43, 50; 10: 12; 11: 3, 31; 13: 21; 14: 31. See also 7: 11. In 16: 18 the main clause also has the subjunctive mood. In classical Greek this type of conditional sentence 'states a supposition which refers to the future, suggesting some probability of its fulfillment.'⁴

Robertson, discussing New Testament Greek, stated that this type of condition is

'undetermined, but with prospect of determination. This class uses in the condition the mode of expectation . . . the subjunctive . . . the subjunctive mode brings the expectation within the horizon of a lively hope in spite of the cloud of hovering doubt.'⁵

Blass-Debrunner states that a great deal of shifting has taken place in the use and meaning of conditional clauses in New Testament Greek; but nevertheless cites Robertson's presentation containing the preceding quotation as 'lucid'.⁶

However, the proposition that in the New Testament the subjunctive is still the 'mode of expectation' does not stand up under scrutiny—at least as far as Mark is concerned.

Looking at Mark's uses of *ean* with the subjunctive we see three cases which might seem to convey an idea of 'probability': 'If I but touch his

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 189.

² *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 190.

⁴ Ernest D. Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1898 (3rd ed.); p. 104.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 1016.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 189.

garment' (5: 28); 'if anyone says to you then, "See, here is the Messiah"' (13: 21); 'if anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?"' (11: 3). But in each case the notion of probability is more likely derived from the context than from the mere verb form used.

From the context we know that the woman did in fact touch Jesus's garment; that men did challenge the disciples' right to untie the colt; and that Jesus taught that false messiahs would in due course arrive. But in other cases the context makes equally clear that the speaker was not asserting or implying the probability of the condition he expressed. For example, 'if he does not first bind the strong man' (3: 27); and 'if I send them away fasting' (8: 3).

It would seem better, therefore, to conclude that clauses of this type set forth conditions that are conceived of as definitely possible or as readily imaginable; that they depict these conditions in a vivid way so that relevant conclusions concerning the present or the future can be drawn from them; but that they do not necessarily imply a commitment by the speaker himself as to whether or not he believes the condition stated is or is not a reality or a probability.¹

The question of whether a condition is merely posited as a hypothesis, or whether on the other hand it is considered by the speaker to be probable, is of much importance in translation into Enga.

The patterns which Enga uses in dealing with the conditional sentences found in Mark's Greek can be classified into three groups which correspond roughly to the classes of Greek conditions, but with considerable overlapping and difference in point of view.

1. The most common type of conditional statement in Enga employs the sentence-medial forms of the future tense, followed either by the simple demonstrative *dóko* or by the phrase *kadaó dóko*. Example:

Mená dokomé nabá natámo kadaó dóko, nabamé baá pyató, 'if the pig bites me, I shall kill it.'

1: 40. *Ébame nabá kameá ijakápurí ráo máseteno dóko, ébame nabá kápa pyóo kameá ijakárapeno.* 'If you wish to heal me, you can.'

This class of condition in Enga sets forth hypotheses regarding the past, present, or future, from which conclusions can be drawn. By using this type of condition the speaker does not automatically imply that the condition is unreal or untrue. But neither does he imply that he personally believes the condition may or will be fulfilled. In using this type of condition he is being non-committal on the question of fulfillment. Of course in a given context a non-committal form of expression can convey overtones either of disbelief or of credulity. But that is due to the context, and not to the form itself.

A special case within this class exists when the conditional clause is to be followed in the main clause by an imperative. In that case, instead of the

¹ For other discussion of Greek conditional sentences see *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 13 (1962), No. 1, pp. 39-43; and No. 4, p. 223 f.

future sentence-medial form with *kadaó*, the ordinary sentence-final forms of the far past tense are employed, followed by the clitic *-kadéno* (or *-kodéno*).

9: 22. *Éba kápa péá-kadéno, náima nisépe*, 'if you are able, help us.'

9: 43. *Ébanya kígí dokomé éba rúgu písíá-kadéno, kaketányá nepápe*, 'if your hand offends you, cut it off.' (See also 11: 3; 13: 21; 14: 35.)

Besides those mentioned above, this class of Enga condition serves well to translate the following conditions with *ean* and the subjunctive: 3: 24 f.; 9: 50; 10: 12; 11: 31; 12: 19; 16: 18. It must also be used for the conditions in 3: 26 and 14: 29, where *ei* with the indicative conveys the meaning of 'if (as is asserted)'.

2. The contrary to fact conditions in 9: 42; 13: 20; and 14: 21 are translated by using the Enga verb forms for imagined but unreal action.

13: 20. *Kamógo dokomé yuú gíi dóko kaketára náeari kadaó dóko, isakari medáipi méde sáka pupegé nájipyari*. 'If the Lord had not cut short the time, no human being would be saved.'

3. An objective, non-committal form of expression is useful in a wide variety of situations. But as we have noted, such a way of speaking may in a given context convey unwanted (or perhaps intentional) overtones of meaning. 'I do not know whether it will rain tomorrow or not, but if it does, I shall not go.' During much of the year such a statement would be unexceptionable. But in a month when daily rain is all but certain, one who spoke in that way would mark himself as sceptical, overly cautious, or odd. One might be more likely to say, 'If it rains tomorrow, as it very likely will, I shall not go'. Or even: 'Since it will almost certainly rain tomorrow, I do not plan to go'.

So while the non-committal construction in (1) above carries the major conditional work in Enga, there are situations where it just does not suit. In such situations the Enga speaker often uses the sentence-medial verb with the suffix *-pa*, which, as we have seen above, indicates circumstance of one kind or another. Examples in Mark are 5: 28 and 8: 3, in each of which the verb in the conditional clause is in the first person singular. To the Enga speaker it seems awkward to express himself non-committally about what he himself is going to do, unless he is really claiming to be in a quandary. In 5: 28 we therefore say: *Nabamé baanyá raparapá kígimi minátopa, sáká páapona*, 'in the circumstance that (or when) I touch his garment, I shall be healed.' (See also 14: 31.)

The conditional clause in 7: 11 refers to a customary practice: 'If a man tells his father or his mother . . .' Here, too, a non-committal 'if' seems out of place to the Enga, for the sense seems to him to be more in the area of 'when' or 'whenever'. Accordingly the sentence-medial form with *-pa* is used. 7: 3 f. is similar to 7: 11, except that since the subject of the conditional clause is the same as that of the main clause, Enga must employ a non-conjugated sentence-medial verb form in the conditional clause.

In 8: 34 and 9: 35 the conditional clauses merge into relative clauses and are treated as such in Enga.

Conclusion

Every language has its own characteristic grammar. If the structures of one language are mechanically imposed on another by the translator, they are bound to be a disturbing alien element.

But the translator dare not on that account have a diminished concern for structure. Syntax always conveys significant meaning. It indicates important relationships and meaningful segmentations of experience. It can even provide clues to the psychological outlook of the writer.

In translating a Biblical book, we have to consider that the meaning conveyed to us through syntax is an integral, intended part of the message and impact of the book. It belongs to the translator's task, therefore, to reproduce in the receptor language the meaning conveyed by the syntactic structures of the source language—and to do this in the most natural and effective ways that he can find, with a minimum of distortion.

THEOPHILE J. MEEK

TRANSLATING THE HEBREW BIBLE

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Of all the books in the world there is surely none that is so difficult to translate as the Hebrew Bible. It is the purpose of this paper to examine a number of its difficult passages and peculiar constructions in an effort to solve at least some of the problems connected with them and so obtain a more accurate translation than any we have now.

A good passage to begin with is Judges 18: 7b, which is regularly emended to agree with the last clause in v. 10. The translation in RSV is typical: 'lacking nothing that is in the earth, and possessing wealth'. The emendation is purely speculative. If the two clauses were so nearly alike originally, it is inconceivable that they would have become so different in the course of time. The opposite procedure is what regularly happens: clauses that are somewhat alike tend to become identical. The only reason for the emendation is the allegation that the Hebrew as it stands makes no sense, but properly interpreted it makes good sense and fits perfectly into the context. It is to be noted at once that the clause is circumstantial, with its subject first and its verb in the form of a participle, two distinguishing marks of the circumstantial clause. The next word, *dābār*, is manifestly in the adverbial accusative of manner, 'in a thing, in any way'. The last two words of the clause are a participle followed by a noun. The translation of RSV, 'and possessing wealth', is most unfortunate, because there is nothing in the Hebrew to suggest 'and', the participle cannot be translated 'possessing', and the noun

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